

# Adidas' Big Feat

The first U.S. fashion show of the brand's Y-3 collection was a bold, dramatic affair requiring five days of around-the-clock set up. Here's how it all came together.

Story by Alesandra Dubin, Photos by Jeff Thomas/ImageCapture

**PRE-LOAD IN** For several days before the load in officially began on Friday, September 9, a team gathered at the empty **Cipriani Wall Street** to investigate rigging points for the installation. By showtime at 9 PM on Tuesday, September 13, the crew would need to cover the ceiling in mirrors and build a three-lane runway with a two-story vault door emblazoned with the **Y-3** logo at the end. "It was the first time the collection was shown in New York—the financial capital of the world," said **Adidas'** head of trend and lifestyle marketing in the United States, **Liad Krispin**, who oversaw the ambitious project. "The vault was an incredible backdrop, a celebration of money and fashion and all things New York. Slick and perfect and over-the-top." Belgium-based show producer **Etienne Russo** of **Villa Eugenie** worked with Paris- and New York-based event production company **OBO** to make it happen.



**FRIDAY** The priority on the first official day of installation was to rig all trusses and the reflective ceiling. OBO connected 31 four- by 23-foot mirrored panels on-site and hung them using an elaborate system of metal linking devices that enabled the team to level them.

**FRIDAY NIGHT** Each panel was lightweight and could be carried by one person. Because the floor installation was scheduled to begin the next day, the mirrored ceiling had to be in place by the end of the day on Friday; it was completed at 5 AM on Saturday morning, just in time for the 6 AM arrival of the scenery truck. (OBO scheduled the arrival of all trucks earlier than the crews to allow the vehicles time to clear the heightened security in the downtown area on the days around the anniversary of the September 11 attacks.) In all, seven semitrailers delivered the scenery, while additional trucks brought carpet, ceiling panels, backstage equipment, lighting, sound, rigging, and more.



**SATURDAY** The scenery installation began on Saturday and took more than three days to complete. Scenic designer **Michael Brown**, a freelance designer who frequently works with OBO, collaborated with **Showman Fabricators** to create the vault door—inspired by the real one in the basement of 55 Wall Street—which the Showman crew covered in shiny metallic, crystal, and mirror silver finishes. The design allowed the 20-foot door to move 10 feet downstage, spin 180 degrees, and then move aside 15 feet. Three 20-foot runway segments slid under the upstage wall to connect with the existing runway after the door had cleared out of the way. The inside of the vault door featured a mirrored centerpiece bearing a bold Y-3 logo.



**OVERNIGHT SUNDAY AND MONDAY** A team from **Hall's Carpet** laid 11,500 square feet of carpet that arrived on Sunday night from **Duggal Visual Solutions**. Installers protected the all-white carpet with plastic and meticulously steam cleaned it as necessary throughout the installation process.



**MONDAY EVENING** The OBO crew finished constructing the three runways from individual pieces that were each eight feet long and four feet wide, in a shape intended to evoke silver ingots or bricks. There was an army of staff on hand to operate all the equipment. Among the lighting staff was a team from fashion show specialists **JKLD**—which handled the labor and all the lighting design—as well as a group from **Bentley Meeker** (the venue's contract vendor), which provided some of the equipment and rigging labor. Lighting fixtures included 19 spotlights for the three runways, as well as 42 additional moving lights for accent. There were also two fog machines, 60 strobe lights, and 120 LED lights for the vault door and nearby wall.



**TUESDAY AFTERNOON** Before the show, dressed-down models got a preshow briefing while sitting on the all-white bleacher-style benches that OBO designed and Showman built (Adidas plans to reuse the seating at future shows), and technical crews ran through rehearsals. "On a one-performance show of this magnitude, mounted in such a short timeline, everything has to work as planned, and there isn't time to change your mind," says OBO's **Susan Schroeder**.

#### TUESDAY EVENING

With the installation complete, the venue was set for the entrance of 1,000 guests, who arrived to find Y-3 flags flying outside, replacing the traditional Cipriani flags—a move that required special permission from the venue. **Metropolitan Hospitality** provided about 50 ushers—outfitted by Y-3—who showed guests to their seats. There were 17 spotlight operators (plus two backups), two stagehands to move the vault door and runway, a light board operator, plus sound crew and stage managers—not to mention two actors who played the burglars who opened the safe.



**SHOWTIME** After an hour-long delay past the show's scheduled 9 PM start time, masked men opened the vault, allowing the models to strut through from their backstage hideaway. Cipriani served Bellinis during the show—which lasted a scant 12 minutes.

#### ADIDAS' Y-3 FASHION SHOW

Cipriani Wall Street  
Tuesday, 09.13.05,  
9 PM onward

**Carpet** Duggal Visual Solutions

**Carpet Installation** Hall's Carpet

**Cleaning Crew** Valbran Maintenance Corporation

**Event Design/Production** OBO

**Drapes** Drape Kings

**Lighting Design/Labor** JKLD

**Lighting Equipment/Labor** Bentley Meeker Lighting & Staging

**PR/Marketing** Häberlein & Maurer

**Scenery** Showman Fabricators

**Security** Citadel

**Show Production** Villa Eugenie

**Sound** Audible Difference

**Ushers** Metropolitan Hospitality

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